

kind of behavior. That is how they beat Max Cleland, and that is how they beat Senator Daschle. We are not going to let them win without telling the American people this is a shameful kind of tactic. They have no scruples when they do something like this.

No one is suggesting the Republicans are a disloyal party or that they have a particular hate design to their association. But when any group associated with the party suggests that suicide bombers are something that Democrats encourage, to trifle with the loss of life that occurred in Israel, and now we see it in Baghdad—how do we feel about our soldiers serving so bravely and gallantly in Iraq, losing their lives? How do we feel about the Iraqis who lost over 100 of their citizens in one day in a suicide bomb attack? We feel terrible.

As a consequence, when something like this, something as scurrilous as this is used, we will condemn it. We are proud of Senator BYRD. He has served this country nobly for many years. Did we disagree with him on some things? Absolutely. We disagree with each other on many occasions. That is what our responsibility is, to disagree when we think something is wrong.

I hope this group will not continue this insinuation that Democrats are disloyal, that Democrats would stand for suicide bombers who kill not only Israelis, who kill our soldiers. Is that what they want to say about Democrats? Perhaps a look in the mirror by people at the top of the administration to examine their own military service and see if they were there to protect the rights of our people.

Use a tactic like this? It cannot work, it shouldn't work, and it won't work.

TRIBUTE TO MAX M. FISHER

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, it was with a great deal of sadness that I learned today that one of the great patriots in America, a man from Illinois, Max Fisher, passed away.

Max Fisher has been a great American statesman, a patriot, a public servant, an entrepreneur, and community leader. He lived in Michigan. He has some Illinois roots also. He was born in 1908 to humble beginnings. He built a company that became SPEEDWAY 76. He was the driving force behind the revitalization of the city of Detroit, and he was a close adviser to four U.S. Presidents.

I got to know him quite well during the 1990s. I was able to visit with him personally. I got to know his family. I was so impressed with his commitment to his family, his community, his people, and his Nation.

He was a great American and a righteous man. We have lost one of our great patriots in America today. I wanted to pay special tribute to Max Fisher and his family on this occasion.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT ERIC STEFFENEY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a soldier who has fallen in service to his country in Iraq. SSG Eric Steffeney of the 18th Ordnance Company died on the 23rd of February near Tuz, Iraq, when an undetected explosive detonated while he cleared the road of landmines. He was 28 years old and is survived by his mother, Annette, his father, Gary, his wife, Theresa, and their three children, Benjamin, Caitlin, and Dennis.

Staff Sergeant Steffeney grew up in Waterloo, IA, where he attended West High School. He graduated from high school early and enlisted in the Army when he was 17 years old. Initially serving as a paratrooper, Staff Sergeant Steffeney eventually joined the Army's bomb squad because he thought it would be more challenging. He was finishing his second tour of duty when he was killed.

Staff Sergeant Steffeney was described as a quiet, loyal, and responsible man who was a good soldier and an all-American boy. Indeed, it is the dedicated and courageous people such as SSG Eric Steffeney who embody the ideals of this great country best and, through the way they lived and gave their lives, keep her people standing proud and strong. I ask all of my colleagues to remember with pride and appreciation this soldier. I give my condolences to the family and friends of Staff Sergeant Steffeney who have felt this loss most deeply. I offer my most sincere gratitude and respect to SSG Eric Steffeney. This country is forever indebted to him and his colleagues for the sacrifices they have made to uphold the ideals which we treasure most as Americans.

STAFF SERGEANT WILLIAM T. ROBBINS

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, Today, I rise to honor the life of SSG William Robbins. At home in Arkansas, he was, above all else, a loving family man who devoted himself entirely to his wife and his children. On the front lines of Operation Iraqi Freedom, he was a dedicated soldier who bravely fought to bring security and stability to a nation torn apart by war.

Staff Sergeant Robbins was born and raised in the small, southern Missouri town of Poplar Bluff. He spent his childhood, as many children do, playing with his friends with whom he shared a love for the outdoors. From an early age, he knew he wanted to be a soldier, and regardless of where he was or what he did, that thought was never far from his mind.

In 1990, he moved to Arkansas and settled in the North Little Rock area. It was there he met the love of his life, his future wife Kimberly, and together they would raise two beautiful daughters, 5-year-old Tristan Ellis, and Abigail, who was less than a year old. It was clear to those who knew him best that his family was his pride and joy and he cherished every minute he spent

with them. This fun-loving soul had a special affinity for children and at family gatherings was often found with the youngest of the group, playing games and bringing smiles to everyone's faces.

In the Arkansas National Guard, SSG Robbins worked full-time as administrative sergeant at the Guard's armory in Beebe. Last year, he was one of only about a dozen soldiers from the armory mobilized for duty in Operation Iraqi Freedom. It would prove to be a bitter-sweet time for the Robbins family; just as the family welcomed home William's mother Janice, a major in the Army Reserves returning from a deployment in Germany, they bid him farewell with prayers of a safe return.

Staff Sergeant Robbins' deployment was the first in his 11-year service in the Arkansas National Guard. While in Iraq, he was attached to the 206th Field Artillery Battalion of the 39th Infantry Brigade, and was selected to work in a military advisory capacity with the Iraqi National Guard. As American forces sought to transition more of their security and stabilization responsibilities to the Iraqi people, SSG Robbins advised and trained these civilian volunteers on infantry tactics as well as the fundamental aspects of being a soldier.

Last fall, SSG Robbins took his military leave and was able to return home for a short time. It was a much-needed reprieve from the dangers of Iraq and offered him the opportunity to return to the place he called home and spend time with the people he cared for most. It also offered him the opportunity to explain to Tristan, who was simply too young to fully understand, why her father had been away and when he would be back for good. As best he could, he explained to her the circumstances of his absence and even the possibility that he may not return. He was once a young man with a parent in the military and could relate to the lack of comprehension children often have in these situations. Relying on this perspective, as well as the natural gift he had always shown in relating to children, Tristan's father was able to provide her with some much needed comfort and understanding.

Along with many of the soldiers from the 39th, SSG Robbins' mission was soon coming to an end and he was to scheduled to return to Arkansas in late March or April. Upon his return, he was looking forward to a new job with the Arkansas National Guard at Camp Robinson's Regional Training Institute in North Little Rock. Even more so, he was looking forward to being reunited with his family. When he spoke with Kimberly, he reminded her how very much he loved her and couldn't wait to come home. When he spoke with Tristan, he told her how much he looked forward to seeing her again so he could take her in his arms and swing her like an airplane.

Tragically, he passed away on February 10 from a gunshot wound at his home base at Camp Taji. While the loss for Kimberly and her family will be felt deeply, they have found some solace knowing that his last days were spent doing what he wanted to do, helping people. In the days following his death, it was clear to his family the impact he had on each of their lives. It was also quickly apparent that although he was no longer with them, his presence would always be felt; whether it was the devotion and thoughtfulness evident in the basket of chocolates and Valentine's Day card he sent Kimberly just before his death, the spirit embodied in the eyes of Abigail who turned 1 year old on February 23, or the courage that Tristan, thanks to her father, has shown in trying to understand what has happened. They are lasting examples of not only the remarkable way he led his life, but more importantly, are a testament to the kind of man he was.

My thoughts and prayers go out to the family and friends of William Robins, and to all those who knew and loved him. His 31 years with us were far too short, but his legacy of love and service to his Nation will remain with us forever.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On October 2, 2004, Daniel Fetta was brutally beaten to death. Fetta, a 39-year-old deaf and gay man, was allegedly struck repeatedly with bricks and boards by three men in his home town of Waverly, OH. His body was stripped of all clothing and thrown into a dumpster. It is believed that the motivation behind this brutal attack was the sexual orientation of the victim.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harm that comes out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

NATIONAL PEACE CORPS WEEK

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, this week is National Peace Corps Week. It is with great pleasure that I send my congratulations to the Peace Corps volunteers serving throughout the world as we celebrate the Peace Corps' 44th year of service.

Currently, more than 7,700 volunteers are answering the call to serve in 72 countries around the world. It is a list that is growing. In an historic agreement focused on science and technology, the Peace Corps entered Mexico last year. And over 20 other countries have expressed interest in establishing a partnership with the Peace Corps.

Peace Corps volunteers have made a 27-month commitment to serve overseas typically in undeveloped or rural areas devoid of many modern necessities such as sanitation, transportation, and electricity. They work to achieve the first goal of the Peace Corps: training and educating people around the world. Volunteers are serving as teachers, business advisors, information technology consultants, agricultural workers, and as HIV/AIDS educators. Today over 3,100 Peace Corps volunteers are helping to implement President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

Even as they work on their projects to help those in the countries they serve, Peace Corps volunteers become America's unofficial "ambassadors" of goodwill, fulfilling the Peace Corps' second goal of helping to promote a better understanding of America. In the words of former U.S. Ambassador Tibor Nagy: "During my long overseas service, I consistently met two categories of people who were highly favorable toward our country: those who had close contact with Peace Corps volunteers, and those who had studied in the U.S." These kinds of public diplomacy efforts are more important today than ever.

What's more, Peace Corps volunteers' unofficial "ambassador" duties do not conclude when they return home to the United States. Rather, they set about completing the third goal of the Peace Corps by promoting a better understanding of other countries here in America. In this way, Peace Corps volunteers give back much to their communities here at home.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Peace Corps, and Narcotics Affairs, it is my desire to continue to assist in the growth of Peace Corps, and the well-being of its volunteers. As the Peace Corps continues to expand, I believe it is necessary to provide this agency the resources it needs to continue to ensure volunteer safety, productivity, and satisfaction. And I applaud efforts by the Peace Corps to further diversify our volunteers.

It is my pleasure to recognize 223 Minnesota volunteers who right now are serving our Nation around the globe in countries from Albania to Uzbekistan. I would also like to recognize the over 5,000 returned Peace Corps volunteers who have already represented Minnesota and the United States abroad. Finally, I am happy to join with all past and present Peace Corps volunteers as we celebrate Peace Corps Week 2005, February 28–March 6.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of the Peace Corps during National Peace Corps Week—February 28 through March 6.

For 44 years, the Peace Corps has engaged in meaningful work and made innumerable contributions to both America and the countries served by Corps members. Today, more than 2,700 Peace Corps volunteers are working to train men and women in 72 countries to provide for their own needs, as well as to promote mutual understanding between Americans and other cultures.

It gives me great pride to know that the Peace Corps and the people of Wisconsin have a strong relationship. Right now, there are 289 Peace Corps volunteers from Wisconsin, including 137 volunteers from the University of Wisconsin-Madison—more volunteers than any other university in the Nation. The State of Wisconsin can also be proud that the university served as a training ground for many groups bound for service in the early years of the Peace Corps.

To better illustrate the work that Wisconsinites do for the Peace Corps, I would like to share this story of great accomplishment. In August 2004, for the first time, the Peace Corps honored returned volunteers with an award recognizing efforts to promote a better understanding by Americans of other cultures. This award was presented to the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Since 1987, the group has raised money by selling calendars with pictures of Peace Corps experiences from around the world. The money is used to promote grassroots projects in countries where the volunteers served. The group also works to raise awareness about the Peace Corps and participates in charity events.

This story is both an inspiration and a call to further service. The \$98,000 that the Returned Peace Corp Volunteers of Wisconsin-Madison donated over a 2-year period to the Peace Corps Partnership Program is a wonderful and meaningful achievement. It is my hope that other people in Wisconsin and throughout the United States will view these returned volunteers as role models.

In closing, I wish to thank the 171,000 Americans who have served in the Peace Corps since 1961 and extend special recognition to the 4,409 Wisconsinites counted among that number. The work of the Peace Corps has made an extraordinarily valuable difference to so many people throughout the world.

CELEBRATING WOMEN IN SCIENCE WEEK

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, it is with great honor that I rise today to publicly recognize South Dakota's Women in Science Conference that is taking place March 7–11, 2005.

Hosted by the National Weather Service, this conference introduces